

COLUSA COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

Minutes of Public Meeting

August 15, 2000

The meeting of the Colusa County Children and Families Commission was called to order at 3:10 p.m. in the Conference Room at the Colusa County Department of Health and Human Services, 251 E. Webster Street, Colusa, California. Commissioners Nolan Gonzales, Barbara Hankins, Nancy Parriott, and Christy Scofield were present, constituting a quorum.

Items discussed in accordance with the publicly-posted agenda were as follows:

1. Approval of Minutes: July 11, 2000 and August 8, 2000 Meetings

Commissioner Parriott moved to approve the minutes for both meetings without correction; motion seconded by Commissioner Hankins. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote (4/0).

2. Review Outstanding Invoices and Approve Payment of Expenses

Two expense items were presented for action:

- An invoice and monthly status report was submitted by Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. for consulting services rendered in July and related expenses. The total invoice amount is \$5,375.28. Commissioner Parriott moved to approve payment of the invoice; motion seconded by Commissioner Hankins. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote (4/0).
- An application form for the Association of California County Children and Families Executives (ACCCFE) was presented. Annual dues for Colusa County are only \$50. Recent financial support from the Packard Foundation will allow the Commission to be fully reimbursed for all travel costs incurred by staff to attend Association meetings and State Commission meetings around the state. Commissioner Hankins moved that the Colusa County Children and Families Commission should join ACCCFE and approve payment of the \$50 annual membership fee; motion seconded by Commissioner Parriott. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote (4/0).

3. Authorization of Agreement with Yuba College Career Resource Center for Office Space

The draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) distributed with the meeting packet was reviewed. Discussion items and changes to the MOU were:

- It is not clear how long distance phone calls and costs of using the copier will be handled. Commissioner Scofield will check with Stewart Knox of Yuba College on these items.
- Office furniture and materials such as a computer, filing cabinet, bookshelf, basic supplies and so on need to be purchased and placed in the office before it will be usable by a staff person. Mike Smith will develop a list of office startup costs as part of the first year budget for the strategic plan, to be reviewed by the Commission in the August 29th meeting. The Commission can then approve a not-to-exceed dollar amount for office setup costs. Once a person has been contracted for the Executive Director position, they will be authorized to select and purchase the office items.

- In paragraph 3 of the agreement, a reciprocal clause needs to be added that allows the Commission to terminate the agreement if its funding is terminated. This is a necessary provision because of the pending lawsuits against the state-wide system of Children and Families Commissions.

Commissioner Parriott made a motion to approve the MOU as amended with the reciprocal clause in paragraph 3; motion seconded by Commissioner Hankins. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote (4/0).

4. Responsibilities and Job Parameters for Staff Position

A draft position description to contract for an Executive Director was reviewed. Changes made to the draft were:

- A requirement will be added that the contractor agree to undergo a background check, including a Trustline scan that includes a fingerprint check.
- Remove the references about candidates being able to get more informational materials from the Colusa County Personnel Department, and instead indicate that “more information about Proposition 10 and the Colusa County Children and Families Commission can be found on the Commission’s web site at <http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/colusa>.”

The total compensation range of \$50,000 – 60,000 contained in the draft was discussed. There was consensus that this range is appropriate since the contractor must incur the costs of all benefits, self-employment taxes, insurance coverage, and miscellaneous expenses out of this amount. The amount of time to allow for applications was also discussed. A three-week period is best; waiting too long can cause some qualified applicants to pursue other opportunities. With the Labor Day weekend coming up, there was agreement that the September 15 application deadline contained in the draft was appropriate.

Roy Martin, the Child Abuse Prevention Coordinator that was contracted through the Small County Initiative grant recently received, noted that extensive insurance requirements are imposed by the County and can delay finalizing an arrangement with the contractor selected. Mr. Martin will provide the Commission with a copy of the final insurance provisions from his contract with the County as a point of reference.

Commissioner Parriott made a motion to authorize the position description as amended, with the position description to be forwarded to the Colusa County Personnel Department for processing and to be opened for applications; motion seconded by Commissioner Hankins. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote (4/0). Commissioner Scofield agreed to coordinate with Cindy Lovelace in the Personnel Department to review the position description and open the position for applications.

Methods of publicizing the position were discussed. Notices should be placed in the Sun Herald, Appeal Democrat and the Chico paper, plus posted at the Yuba College Career Resource Center. A notice about the position will also be added to the Commission’s web site. The list of candidates who recently applied for the Child Abuse Prevention Coordinator position could also be contacted.

5. Recommendations for Changes to the Local Ordinance that Established the Colusa County Children and Families Commission

The provisions of AB 1910 were discussed, highlighting the choice that has been defined between structuring the Commission as a county agency or as a separate public entity. It is unclear if, or when, the local ordinance needs to be amended to explicitly elect one of these two choices of legal structure. Other County Commissions are split fairly evenly as to how they are being structured; many have become county agencies but many others have obtained separate public entity status. Of the ones that are separate, some have still contracted with the County for some or all of their support services; others have either hired their own staff or have contracted with local nonprofit organizations to provide support services.

Discussion ensued about the advantages and disadvantages of being separate or being a county agency. The primary concern about being a county agency is that the Board of Supervisors may then seek to control funding decisions as would occur with any other county department, but this cannot be allowed due to state laws that require the Children and Families Commission to retain “independent authority” over the strategic plan and use of funds.

Bonnie Marshall, Director of Colusa County Health and Human Services, recommended that the Commission meet with Don Stanton, County Counsel, to get his opinion as to which legal structure would be best for the Commission and whether the local ordinance must be amended. Commissioner Scofield indicated she would meet with Mr. Stanton on this subject.

The Commission also just received a letter from the County Auditor-Controller’s office indicating that if the Commission becomes a separate public entity, it would no longer be covered under the County’s “crime bond” insurance policy and would need to consider its own insurance. A price quote was provided for this type of insurance coverage, which offers protection in the event of various criminal acts by Commission members and/or staff such as embezzlement, forgery, and improper access to bank accounts. An opinion is being sought by the Auditor-Controller’s office as to whether the Commission can be covered by the County’s workers compensation insurance.

The other possible reason for amending the local ordinance is to change the size of the Commission. For example, conflict of interest laws may create a situation where multiple Commission members cannot vote on certain funding decisions involving County departments, leading to paralysis unless more Commission members are added that are independent of the county. Bonnie Marshall indicated that she did not have any objection to increasing the size of the Commission at this time; it is a matter of whatever the Commission believes would best support its ability to function. Commissioner Scofield agreed to talk with Don Stanton to get his recommendations on adopting a conflict of interest code for the Commission.

A final note was that if the size of the Commission is increased by adding more community or “at large” members, any members added must fall into one of the categories defined in state law: recipients of project services included in the county strategic plan adopted by the Commission; educators specializing in early childhood development; representatives of a local child care resource or referral agency, or a local child care coordinating group; representatives of a local organization for prevention or early intervention for families at risk; representatives of community-based organizations that have the goal of promoting nurturing and early childhood development; representatives of local school districts; and representatives of local medical, pediatric, or obstetric associations or societies.

6. Public Comment and Unscheduled Matters

Mike Smith gave an update on the status of possible funding augmentations for County Commissions with smaller budgets. It appears that the proposal that has the most support among the rural counties is to request a \$100,000 administration allowance for each county receiving less than \$1 million per year. The administration allowance would be in addition to funds allocated based on birth rates and would be used to pay for staff, office space, audits, public relations, legal support and other such costs that are required to operate a Commission. The proposal is being finalized by the Rural Caucus of the Association of California County Children and Families Executives, with a goal of submitting it for consideration by the State Commission in their September meeting.

The status of the strategic planning process was discussed. A draft of the complete plan will be completed by August 22 and sent to the Commission members for review prior to the August 29 meeting. After changes are made based on the Commission guidance at the August 29 meeting, the draft strategic plan will be sent to everyone who participated in any Advisory Council meetings, posted on the web site, made available at all local libraries, and publicized so that any member of the public can request a copy to review.

The need to translate the strategic plan into Spanish was discussed. Rosa Mendoza at Children's Services will be contacted about serving as a translator at the September 12th public hearing, using the whisper system, but the written document also needs to be available in Spanish. Mike Smith will contact the Prop. 10 TA Center for free assistance with the translation, starting with the executive summary first and then expanding to other sections of the plan.

7. Dates for Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 29, from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. in the Morse Conference Room at the Colusa Public Library. The agenda is expected to include (1) review of the first draft of the complete strategic plan, (2) response to the County regarding crime bond insurance coverage, (3) status of discussions with Don Stanton on structure and conflict of interest questions, and (4) approval of expenses, including costs of publicizing and distributing the proposed strategic plan for public comment.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Mike Smith, consultant to the Commission.